



**Media Contact:**

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***FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE***

**BREWER-WATSON TO JOIN HOUSING TASK FORCE**

**KANKAKEE, Ill. (March 14, 2022)** – Recently Barbi Brewer-Watson, Executive Director of the City of Kankakee's Economic and Community Development Agency was approved to join Illinois' 2<sup>nd</sup> Congressional District Housing Task Force facilitated by Congresswoman Kelly.

"I am very eager to work with other District officials in advocating for housing needs in our region and especially for Kankakee," states Brewer-Watson. "Improving housing for our residents has a positive ripple effect that benefits our community in so many ways. It is the foundation of community and economic development."

The objective of the Housing Taskforce is to provide an opportunity to connect, in a grassroots effort, with experts who can provide vision and intuition within the topic of housing. The Housing Taskforce will identify and develop viable solutions to tackle the more pressing housing issues affecting communities. Together, the Taskforce can craft potential solutions consisting of legislation, events, outreach, and more by recognizing the problems. As a Taskforce member, Mrs. Brewer-Watson's responsibilities will include but are not limited to, attending virtual monthly meetings, generating solutions, establishing programs, conducting research, utilizing networks to promote future events and projects.

"We are proud that Director Brewer-Watson has joined this taskforce and she will represent the City well," said City of Kankakee Mayor Chris Curtis. "She takes leadership opportunities seriously and advocates for bringing back resources, information and opportunities to the City of Kankakee and the residents to use." Curtis added, "Housing in each and every community is a vital element to a successful municipality and the City of Kankakee will work and partner to make sure that our residents have safe, secure and affordable housing today and for our future."

Some, not all, of Brewer-Watson’s target areas for housing advocacy include:

- Increasing housing opportunities for the severely cost-burdened individuals
- Creating jobs in the building trades through new construction efforts
- Leveraging private investment to help with housing rehab programs; especially for older homes and historic homes
- Creating opportunities for homeownership for people of color and underinvested neighborhoods
- Identify resources that help prevent and end homelessness

She will attend her first meeting this month.

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#### **About the Economic and Community Development Agency (ECDA):**

The Kankakee Economic and Community Development Agency (ECDA) is a local government agency whose mission is to improve the lives of Kankakee residents and enhance the economic vitality of communities through housing, economic development and community development. The ECDA administers programs that serve the neighborhoods and residents of the City of Kankakee provided by federal, state and local funding. For more information, contact ECDA at 815-933-0506, Monday – Friday between 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Visit our website at <https://ecda.citykankakee-il.gov/>.

#### **About the City of Kankakee, Illinois:**

The City of Kankakee is dedicated to protecting, building and nurturing the community while enhancing lives. We are a historic, vibrant and active riverfront community. We continue to transform into an extraordinary place to dream, grow and thrive. Embracing our diversity, we strive to be progressive, inclusive and innovative. For more information on the City of Kankakee, please visit the website at [www.citykankakee-il.gov](http://www.citykankakee-il.gov).